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Culin, Stewart
Chinese games with dice

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CHINESE GAMES WITH DICE.

BY STEWART CULIN.



READ BEFORE THE ORIENTAL CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA.

MARCH 14, 1889.



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This paper is intended as the first of a series on Chinese games, to be continued by similar accounts of dominoes, playing cards, and chess. The games described in it, as in those intended to follow it, are chiefly those of the Chinese laborers in America, a limitation found as acceptable as it is necessary, since even among these people who all come from a comparatively small area, there exist variations in their methods of gambling, as well as in the terminology of their games. The latter is largely made up of slang and colloquial words, and presents many difficulties. The gamblers are usually the most ignorant class, and those most familiar with the games are often least able to furnish correct Chinese transcriptions of the terms employed in them, and literal translations of these, even when obtained, are misleading.

My thanks are due to Mr. C. H. Kajiwara, of Tokio, for translations of the Japanese texts, and to Lí ch'un shán, Sín shang, of Hohshan, for valued information about the Game of Promotion.

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CHINESE GAMES WITH DICE.

(Read before The Oriental Club of Philadelphia, March 14, 1889.)

Chinese dice* consist of small cubes of bone marked on each side with incised spots from one to six in number, which are arranged in the same manner as the spots on modern European dice, as well as on those of Greece and Rome of classical antiquity; the 'six' and 'one,' 'five' and 'two,' and 'four' and 'three,' being on opposite sides.

The 'four' and the 'one' spots on Chinese dice are painted red, and the 'six,' 'five,' 'three' and 'two' are painted black. The 'one' is always much larger and more deeply incised than the other spots, possibly to compensate for its opposite, the 'six.'

The origin of the custom of painting the 'fours' red is accounted for, according to the *Wa Kan san sai dzu e* † by the following story: An emperor of the Ming dynasty (A. D. 1368-1643) played at *sugoroku* with his queen. He was almost defeated by her, but had one way of winning through the dice turning 'fours.' He cried and threw the dice and they came as he desired, whereupon he was exceedingly glad and ordered that the 'fours' thereafter be painted red, in remembrance of his winning.

A similar story was related to me as a common tradition among the Cantonese, by an intelligent Chinese who gave the Emperor's

* The common name for dice among the Cantonese is *shik tsai*, composed of *shik* 'colors,' and *tsai*, 'a little thing, the smaller of two.'

In Medhurst's *English and Chinese Dictionary*, Shanghai, 1847, three other names for dice are given: *t'au tsz'*, composed of *t'au*, written with a character compounded of the radicals, *kwat* 'bone,' and *shü*, 'a weapon,' 'to strike,' and the auxiliary *tsz'*; *shéung luk*, 'double sixes,' from what is regarded as the highest throw with two dice, and *luk ch'ik*, literally 'six carnation.' The last name may be considered as a compound of the terms for the most important throws: 'six' and carnation or red; the 'four,' to which, as will be seen, an especial significance is attached, as well as the 'one,' the lowest throw with a die, being painted red. In Japanese dice are called *sai*, a word written with a Chinese character meaning 'variegated.'

† 'Japanese Chinese Three Powers' (Heaven, Earth, Man) picture collection.' Osaka, 1714. Vol. 17, fol. 4.

name as *Lò Ling Wong*,* who reigned under the title of Chung Tsung (A. D. 684, 701-710). Mr. Herbert A. Giles tells me that the story is mentioned by a Chinese author; but I am inclined to regard the account as merely fanciful, and think it is probable that the color of the 'fours' was derived, with the dice themselves, from India.†

Several sizes of dice are used by the Chinese, varying from a cube of two-tenths to one of seven-tenths of an inch. Different sizes are employed in different game according to custom.

Dice are usually thrown by hand into a porcelain bowl, the players throwing in turn from right to left, and accompanying their efforts with cries of *loi!* 'come!'

The Chinese laborers in the United States play several games with dice, but they are not a popular mode of gambling, and are generally neglected for *fán t'án*, and Chinese dominoes.

SZ' NG LUK:

The best known of these games is called *sz' ng luk*, 'four, five, six,' commonly contracted to *sing luk*, and is played with three dice of the largest size. The throws in it in the order of their rank are:

Three alike, from three 'sixes' down, called *wai*.‡

'Four, five, six,' called *sing luk*, or *ch'ün fá*.§

Two alike, the odd die counting, from 'six' down to ace, the last throw being called *yat fat*, 'ace negative.'

'One, two, three,' called *mò lung*, 'dancing dragon,' or *shé tsai*, 'little snake.'

The first player is determined, on throwing around, to be the one who throws the highest number of red spots. The other players lay their wagers, usually in sums divisible by three, before them. The first player throws until he makes one of the above-mentioned casts. If he throws *sing luk* ('four, five, six'); three alike; or two alike, 'six' high, each of the players at once pay

* Whence a vulgar name for dice among the Cantonese, *hot lò*, composed of *hot*, 'to call out loud,' and *lò*, for *Lò Ling Wong*.

† I am informed that modern Indian dice are frequently marked with black and red spots. In the *Māhābharata* (iv. 1.25) reference is made to 'dice, dotted black and red.' Prof. E. W. Hopkins, J. A. O. S., Vol. 13, p. 123.

‡ *Wai* means 'to inclose,' and is a term that is also employed in Chinese games of chess and cards.

§ Literally 'strung flowers.'

him the full amount of their stakes ; but if he throws *mò lung* or *yat fat*, he pays them the full amount of their stakes. If he throws two alike, 'five,' 'four,' 'three,' or 'two' high, the next player on his left throws. If the latter makes a higher cast, the first player must pay him, but if a lower cast, he must pay the first player. The amounts thus paid are usually proportionate to the difference between the throws with the odd die. If it is four or three, the full amount ; if two, two-thirds, or if one, one-third of the stakes must be paid.

The third player throws in the same way, and the game is continued until the first player is out-thrown.

KON MÍN YÉUNG.

Kon mín yéung, 'pursuing sheep,' is played with six dice of the largest size. It is a game played for small stakes, usually for something to eat, and is seldom resorted to by professional gamblers.

In it the player throws until he gets three alike, when the sum of the spots on the other dice is counted.

The throws in the order of their rank are :

Six 'sixes,' called *tái mín yéung*, 'large sheep.

Six 'fives,' 'fours,' 'threes,' 'twos,' or 'ones,' called *mín yéung kung*, 'rams.'

Three alike and 'six, six, five,' called *mín yéung ná*, the 'ewe.'

Three alike, and the other throws than the above. These are designated by the number representing the sum of the throws with the three odd dice.

The throws, *tái mín yéung* and *mín yéung kung*, take all the stakes. If *mín yéung ná*, or any other cast of three alike, is made, the next player throws until he gets three alike, when he pays if his throw is lower, or is paid if it is higher, as in *sing luk*.

The throw of three 'fours' is called *wong p'ang fúí*, concerning the origin of which name the following story is related : 'A boy and a girl were betrothed by their parents. The girl's father died, and the family having been reduced to poverty, her brother sold the girl to become a prostitute. This she resented, and anxious to find her betrothed, whose face she well remembered, she caused it to be advertised that she would yield herself to the man who could throw three 'fours' with the dice. Many, attracted by her beauty, tried and failed, until her husband, *Wong p'ang-fúí*, who had obtained the rank of *kái ün*, or senior wrangler at the provincial examination, presented himself. For him she substituted

loaded dice, with which he threw three 'fours,' whereupon she disclosed herself, and they were happily united.'

CHÁK T'IN KAU.

Chák t'in kau, 'throwing heaven nine,' is played with two dice.

In this game the twenty-one throws that can be made with two dice receive different names, and are divided into two series or suits, called *man*, 'civil,' and *mò*, 'military.'

The eleven *man* throws in the order of their rank are figured on the right of Plate I. They are :

- 'Double six,' called *t'ín*, 'Heaven.'
- 'Double one,' called *tí*, 'Earth.'
- 'Double four,' called *yan*, 'Man.'
- 'One, three,' called *wo*, * 'Harmony.'
- 'Double five,' called *múi*, 'plum flower.' †
- 'Double three,' called *chéung sám*, 'long threes.'
- 'Double two,' called *pán tang*, 'bench.'
- 'Five, six,' called *fú t'au*, 'tiger's head.'
- 'Four, six,' called *hung t'au shap*, 'red head ten.'
- 'One, six,' called *kò kéuk ts'at*, 'long leg seven.'
- 'One, five,' called *hung ch'ui luk*, 'red mallet six.'

The ten *mò* throws in the order of their rank are figured on the left of Plate I. They are :

- 'Five, four,' and 'six, three,' called *kau*, 'nines.'
- 'Five, three,' and 'six, two,' called *pát*, 'eights.'
- 'Five, two,' and 'four, three,' called *ts'at*, 'sevens.'
- 'Four, two,' called *luk*, 'six.'
- 'Three, two,' and 'four, one,' called *ng*, 'fives.'
- 'One, two,' called *sám*, 'three,' or *sám kai*, 'three final.'

The first player determined, the other players lay their wagers on the table. The first player then throws and his cast determines the suit, whether *man* or *mò*, for that round. No other throws count and the players throw again, if necessary, until they make a cast of the suit led. If the first player throws the highest pair of either series, that is the 'double six' of the *man*, or one of the 'nines' of the *mò*, each player at once pays him, but if he leads

* This throw is called by some *ngo*, a 'goose,' a name, like those of the throws that follow it in this series, evidently derived from a fancied resemblance of the spots on the dice.

† The five spot is also called by the name of *mume* or 'plum (flower)' in Japan.

武



九



八



七



六



五



三鸡



文



天



地



人



和



梅



長三



板橙



虎頭



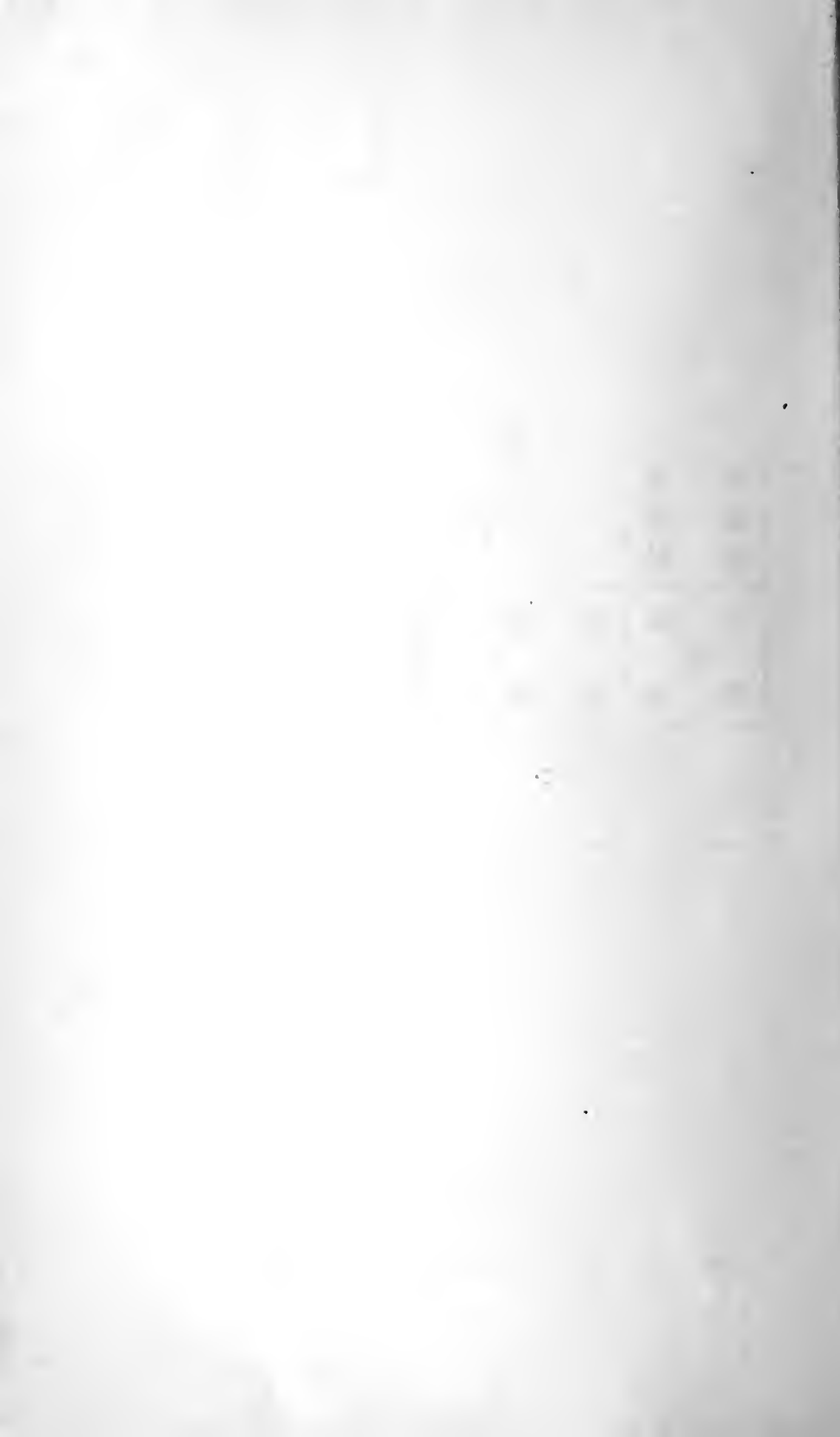
紅頭什



高脚七



紅推六



the lowest of either suit, that is the 'five, one,' or 'one, two,' he pays them the amount of their stakes.

If he throws any other pair than the highest or the lowest of either suit, the second player throws, and is paid his stakes, if he throws higher by the first player, or pays him if he throws lower. The game is continued until the first player is out-thrown, when he is succeeded by the second player and the others lay their wagers as before.

PÁT CHÁ.

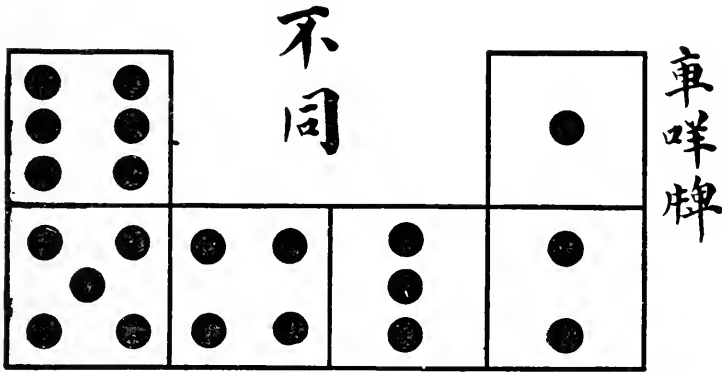


Fig. 1.

Pát chá, 'handful of eight,' is played with eight dice, preferably of the smallest size. In this game, the banker is provided with a diagram (Fig. I) numbered or dotted, like the six faces of a die, upon which the players lay their stakes. It bears the legend *pát t'ung*, 'unlike,' which expresses the desire of the banker as to the manner in which the dice shall fall. A player throws eight dice. If at least three fall like the number bet on, the game keeper pays him eight times, or if six or more are like the number bet on, sixteen times the amount of his stakes. In any other event, the player loses. A similarly marked tablet is used in playing with the *ch'é mé* or teetotum. This implement is made with six dotted sides. The players lay their stakes upon the numbers on the tablet, and win four times the amount if the one played on turns uppermost, or lose, if another number comes up. The *ch'é mé* is said to sometimes have its sides decorated with pictures of fish and animals instead of numbers or spots, and the diagram, which is called the *ch'é mé p'ái*, or the 'tablet for the teetotum' is then similarly inscribed.*

* In this connection reference might be made to a game called *hung*

CHONG ÜN CH'AU.

Chong ün ch'au is a game played with tallies, *ch'au*, the highest of which is called *chong ün*, the name given the *Optimus* at the examinations for the degree of Hanlin, whence I have styled it 'The Game of the Chief of the Literati.' Two or more persons may play, using six dice and sixty-three bamboo tallies. The latter receive the following names :

First. One piece about six inches in length, called *chong ün*, the First of the Hanlin doctors. This counts as thirty-two.

Second. Two shorter pieces called *pong ngán*, Second of the Hanlin, and *t'ám fá*, Third of the Hanlin. Each count as sixteen.

Third. Four shorter pieces called *úi ün*, the First of the *tsun sz'*, or Literary Graduates of the Third Degree. Each count as eight.

Fourth. Eight shorter pieces called *tsun sz'*, Literary Graduates of the Third Degree. Each count as four.

Fifth. Sixteen shorter pieces called *kü yan*, Graduates of the Second Degree. Each count as two.

Sixth. Thirty-two shorter pieces called *sau ts'oi*, Graduates of the First Degree. Each count as one.

The first, second, and third classes bear rude pictures and names, but the others are distinguished only by their size.

Two or more persons can play. The players throw in turn from right to left, and after throwing, each draws the tallies he is entitled to according to the appended table. If the tally called for by a throw has been drawn, its value may be made up from the remaining ones ; but the winner of the *chong ün* must surrender it without compensation if another player makes a higher throw than that by which he won it. The one who counts highest becomes the winner.

This game is said to be played by women and children, and is not played by the Chinese laborers in the Eastern United States, although they are generally acquainted with it.

hak, 'red and black,' in which a large die marked on two opposite sides with red, and on two opposite sides with black, is said to be used. The manipulator grasps the die, by its unmarked sides, between his thumb and forefinger, and covers it with a square box. The players lay their stakes on either the red or the black, and double their money if the color bet on is discovered, when the box is lifted. Cheating is easy, and in consequence, the game is said to be only patronized by children. I have not seen it played by the Chinese in the United States, but is said by them to be generally known throughout China.

The throws in *chong ün ch'au* in the order of their rank are :

Six '4's.'	Six '3's.'
Six '6's.'	Six '2's.'
Six '5's.'	Six '1's.'

These throws are called *ts'un shik*, and take all the tallies.

Five '4's' and one '6,' or one '5,' or one '3,' or one '2,' or one '1.'
 Five '6's' and one '4,' or one '5,' or one '3,' or one '2,' or one '1.'
 Five '5's' and one '4,' or one '6,' or one '3,' or one '2,' or one '1.'
 Five '3's' and one '4,' or one '6,' or one '5,' or one '2,' or one '1.'
 Five '2's' and one '4,' or one '6,' or one '5,' or one '3,' or one '1.'
 Five '1's' and one '4,' or one '6,' or one '5,' or one '3,' or one '2.'

Four '4's' and one '3' and one '1.'
 Four '4's' and two '2's.'
 Four '6's' and one '4' and one '2.'
 Four '6's' and one '5' and one '1.'
 Four '6's' and two '3's.'
 Four '5's' and one '4' and one '1.'
 Four '5's' and one '3' and one '2.'
 Four '3's' and one '2' and one '1.'
 Four '2's' and two '1's.'

Four '4's' and two '6's.'
 Four '4's' and one '6' and one '5.'
 Four '4's' and two '5's.'
 Four '4's' and one '6' and one '3,' or one '6' and one '2.'
 Four '4's' and one '5' and one '3,' or one '6' and one '2.'
 Four '4's' and one '5' and one '2,' or one '5' and one '1.'
 Four '4's' and two '3's,' or one '3' and one '2.'
 Four '4's' and one '2' and one '1,' or two '1's.'

Each of the above throws count as thirty-two, and take the *chong ün*.

Two '4's,' two '5's,' and two '6's.'
 Two '1's,' two '2's,' and two '3's.'
 Three '4's' and three '6's,' or 5's,' or '3's,' or '2's,' or '1's.'
 Three '6's' and three '5's,' or '3's,' or '2's,' or '1's.'
 Three '5's' and three '3's,' or '2's,' or '1's.'
 Three '3's' and three '2's' or '1's.'
 A sequence from '1' to '6.'

Each count as sixteen, and take either the *pong ngán* or *t'ám fá*.

Three 'fours,' with any combination except those mentioned, count as eight, and take one of the *úi ün*.

Four 'sixes,' four 'fives,' four 'threes,' four 'twos,' or four 'ones,' with any combination of two dice, except those already mentioned, count as four, and take one of the *tsun sz'*.

Two 'fours' count as two, and take one of the *kü yan*.

One 'four' counts as one, and takes one of the *sau ts'oi*.

The Chinese game similar to backgammon, which that accomplished scholar, Dr. Robert Hyde, described in his work on Oriental games under the name of *Chinensium Nerdiludium* ('The Nerd Game of the Chinese'),* is not played by the Chinese laborers in America, nor do any I have met appear to be acquainted with it.

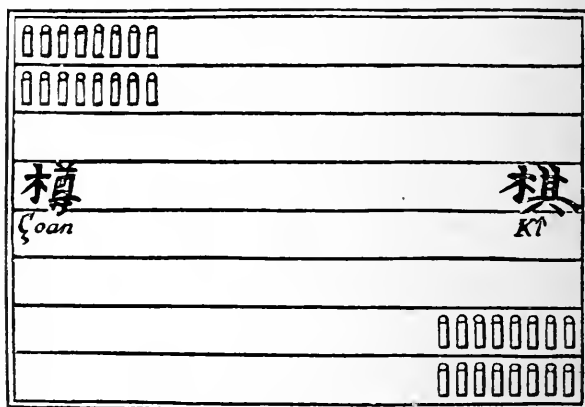


Fig. 2.

According to Dr. Hyde, it is called by Chinese, *Çoan Kî*, which he translates as *erectus ludus*, or *erectorum ludus*, but which might be rendered as 'the bottle game' or 'bottle chess,' *Çoan* (*tsun*) meaning a vase or bottle, and *Kî* (*k'î*) being a generic term for games played on lines as chess.

This game is played with dice and small upright pillars, from which the name is derived. The board is divided into eight equal parts by transverse lines, and the pieces, which are from two to three inches high and number sixteen on each side, are arranged upon it when the playing commences, as seen in the figure.

The pieces are moved line by line, according to the throws with the dice, from the places on the left to the eighth place on the right, and from thence ascending to the opposite side and back to the starting place; the player who first gets all his pieces there winning the game.

* *De Ludis Orientalibus*. Oxford, 1694, p. 65.

Two dice are thrown, and the pieces are moved to the places which the number of the throw directs. One may move whatever piece or pieces one chooses, according to the number, either pieces which have been moved before or those which have not yet been moved. If, instead of upright pieces, one plays with small flat discs, which is also permitted, they may be placed side by side or piled on top of each other, as seems most convenient.

A throw of two 'ones' causes a piece to be set aside and delivered up as lost; or, if the game is played for money, it loses the player the tenth part of his stakes. Whoever throws 'twos' or 'threes' begins moving to the second or third lines, and so on. If doublets are thrown, one may move to the place corresponding to the half number of such doublets; and this may be done by moving one piece once to such half number, or two pieces at the same time to the place corresponding with such whole number, for in this case either one piece or two pieces together may be moved. If 'five' and 'six,' which make eleven, are thrown, one may move one piece to the fifth place and another to the eleventh; or else move two pieces at the same time to the tenth line or place, and then one of them to the next line, which is the eleventh. And thus with respect to other throws: if single (as 'two' and 'four'), for the single numbers move as many places, but if joined (as 'five' and 'six'), then otherwise, as already stated.

SUGOROKU.

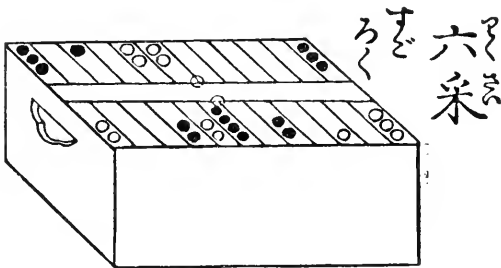


Fig. 3.

The game thus described by Dr. Hyde agrees in some respects with the Japanese game of *sugoroku*, as illustrated in native encyclopædias. In Fig. 3, reproduced from the *Kum mō dzu e tai sei*,*

* 'Very complete collection of pictures to teach the unenlightened.' Kiyoto, 1789. Vol. 4, part 8, fol. 5.

the board is represented as being divided into twelve parts by longitudinal lines, which are broken in the middle by an open space similar to the *ho kái*, or 'dividing river,' of the Chinese chess-board. According to the same work, the twelve compartments, called in Japanese, *me*, or 'eyes,' symbolize the twelve months, and the black and white stones with which the game is played, day and night.

The moves are made according to the throws with dice; the name being derived from that of the highest throw, *sugoroku* (Chinese, *shéung luk*), or 'double sixes.'*

This game appears to be of great antiquity in Japan. The *Wa Kan san sai* states that it is recorded in the Japanese Annals that *sugoroku* was forbidden in the time of Jitō Tennō (A. D. 687-692), and that it is probable that it was played in Japan before the game of *go* † was brought to that country. The same encyclopædia, in the careful manner usual in such works, makes a number of citations from Chinese authors with reference to the origin of the game. It says it is recorded in the *Suh sz' ch'i*, ‡ that Ts'ao Chih § of Wei invented *sugoroku*, and used two dice for it, but at the end of the Tang dynasty (A. D. 618-913), the number of the dice was increased to six.

It is written in the *Wú tsáh tsú* that *sugoroku* is a game that was originally played in Hú (Japanese, *Kō*), the country of the Tartars. It relates that the king of Hú had a brother who was put to death for a crime. While in prison he made the game of *sugoroku* and sent it to his father, writing with it a few words in order to make known how men are oppressed by others when they are single and weak.

The *Ngán lui yáu* states that *sugoroku* came from T'ien Chuh, 'India.'

The name of *sugoroku* is said to be applied at the present day in Japan to various games played upon boards or diagrams, in which

* *Sugoroku* is also called *rokusai*, as will be seen from the names appended to Fig. 3.

† Chess; by which the game of three hundred and sixty men, half black and half white, called by the Chinese *wai k'i*, is meant.

‡ I am unable to identify either this or the two following works quoted in the *Wa Kan san sai*.

§ Ts'ao Chih (A. D. 192-232), was the third son of the great usurper Ts'au Tsáu, who overthrew the Han dynasty. He was distinguished by precocious talent and poetical genius, and devoted himself wholly to literary diversions. *The Chinese Reader's Manual*, No. 759.

the moves are made by throwing dice.* Of these there are many kinds, among which the most popular is called *dô chiu*, or 'traveling' *sugoroku*. It is played upon a large sheet of paper, on which are represented the various stopping places upon a journey; as, for example, the fifty-three post stations between Tokio and Kiyoto; and resembles the games of 'snake' and 'steeple-chase,' familiar to English and American children.† Such games are much played

* The name is also applied to at least one simple dice game in which no board or diagram is used. Mr. Kajiwara informs me that in the Province of Aomori, a common game with two dice is called *ichi-san sugoroku*; so called from the name of the highest throw *ichi san*, 'one, three.'

Japanese dice at the present day have their six faces regularly marked with black dots. Those used by gamblers are said to be larger than the kind employed in popular amusements. The dice games are said to vary in different parts of the Empire. Japanese sailors in New York City play a game with two dice called *chō han*, 'even and odd.' They throw two dice under a cup. The even throws are called *chō* and the odd, *han*. The players, two or more in number, bet on the even or odd by calling out and laying their wagers before them while the cup remains inverted over the dice. They use foreign playing cards cut lengthwise in strips and tied in bundles of ten as counters, instead of money; a custom that they say has its origin in the use of the narrow Japanese playing cards at home for this purpose. The same game, under the same name, called by the Chinese *chéung pun*, is known to the Cantonese laborers in the United States as a common game in China.

† Benjamin Smith Lyman, Esq., exhibited at the meeting a paper diagram for a game of *sugoroku*, which was entitled, according to the characters on the sheet, *Hokkaidō shin dô ichi ran sugoroku*, or 'A glance at the Hokkaidō new road *sugoroku*.'

This game was published in 1873 on the occasion of the opening of a new road through the southern part of the island of Yesso from Hakodate to Sapporo, the capital.

The diagram consists of an impression in colors, 32½ by 20 inches, and is divided into 38 parts, exclusive of the goal and the starting place. These contain pictures of the scenery at the different stations on the road, each division having a tablet beside it on which the name of the place is written, with the distance to the next stopping place. The game is played with one die, the players throwing in turn, and advancing from the lower right-hand corner to the goal at the centre. Each spot of the throw counts as one station on the diagram. If a player's move leaves him upon a division having the character *tomare*, 'stop over!' he loses his next throw. When a player near the goal makes a higher throw than is just necessary to take him into the central

by the Japanese at the season of the New Year, when new ones are usually published. This year (1889), Japanese newspapers report that two new games of *su,oroku* found much favor in Tokio.

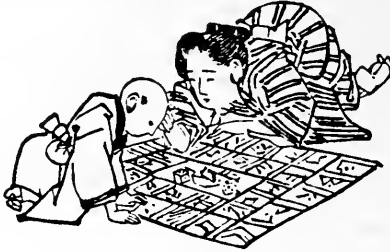


Fig. 4.

The same general name would be given by the Japanese to the following Chinese game, which I have occasionally seen played by the clerks in Chinese stores in our cities.

SHING KÚN T'Ō.

Shing kún t'ō, the 'table of the promotion of officials,' is the celebrated game which is best known through Dr. Hyde's account* as 'The Game of the Promotion of Mandarins.'

It is played by two or more persons upon a large paper diagram, on which are printed the titles of the different officials and dignitaries of the Chinese government. The moves are made by throwing dice, and the players, whose positions upon the diagram are indicated by notched or colored splints, are advanced or set back, according to their throws.†

The following story was related to me concerning the invention of the game: 'The Emperor Kienlung (A. D. 1736-1796) was in the habit of walking at nightfall among the houses occupied by the candidates for the degree of Hanlin, who came up to Peking for the triennial examination; and hearing, night after night, the song of the dice issuing from one of them, he summoned the offender before him to explain his conduct. In excuse, fearing punishment, he told the Emperor that he had constructed a chart,

space, he is set back: if he has an excess of one to the fifth place from the goal; of two, to the fourth place, and so on.

* *De Ludis Orientalibus*, p. 70.

† A similar but much simpler game, with the titles of Japanese instead of Chinese officials, is played in Japan under the name of *kuwan-roku*.

on which were written the names of all the official positions in the government, and that he and his friends threw dice, and according to their throws traversed the board, and were thus impressed with a knowledge of the various ranks and the steps leading to official advancement. The Emperor commanded him to bring the chart for his inspection. That night the unfortunate graduate, whose excuse was a fiction created at the moment, sat until daybreak, pencil in hand, and made a chart according to his story, which he carried to the Emperor. That august prince professed to be much pleased with the diligence of the scholar who improved his mind, even while amusing himself, and dismissed him with many commendations.'

This familiar sounding story cannot be accepted without question, especially since it will be seen that Dr. Hyde published his account many years before the period mentioned; but my informant, a clerk in a Chinese shop in Philadelphia, may not have stated the date correctly.

The paper charts for the game may be purchased at the Chinese stores in New York and San Francisco. The names of the different offices are arranged upon them in rectangular divisions, alongside of each of which is a tablet with the name of the board or class under which those within it are included. They ascend from the lowest to the highest in successive stages, arranged in order around the chart from right to left, and from the outer division, which is devoted to provincial officials, to the innermost, which has the titles of the members of the metropolitan administration. The centre is occupied with rules for playing. Four dice are thrown in turn by each player, instead of six, as formerly recorded by Dr. Hyde. Entrance is obtained by making a cast, either of four alike, by which the player is at once advanced to an 'hereditary rank;' of 'three, four, five, six,' called *ch'ün fá*; of three alike, or two alike. All of these throws, in descending order, enable the player to enter one of the positions from which advancement may be obtained. Subsequent promotion depends upon the throws; doublets enabling the player to move once; three alike, twice; and four alike, three times. 'Double fours' count highest, 'double sixes' next, and so on down to 'ones,' through which the player is set back. The appropriate move for each throw is indicated in small characters beneath each of the titles on the chart.

A curious contrast is presented between the little sheet reproduced by Dr. Hyde, upon which only the principal officials of the Ming dynasty are represented, and that now current, whereon may

be seen the innumerable ramifications of the Chinese 'civil service' under the present Tartar dominion.* Nearly two centuries have passed since the learned Doctor, aided, no doubt, by the one to

* Some additional particulars about this game may not be uninteresting. The charts, such as I have seen used in the United States, are printed in Canton and bear an impression about twenty-three inches square. They are divided into sixty-three compartments, exclusive of the central one and the place for entering at the lower right-hand corner. The latter contains the names of thirteen different starting-points, from *yan shang*, or 'Honorary Licentiate,' down to *t'ung shang*, or 'student,' between which are included the positions of *t'in man shang*, 'astrologer,' and *i shang*, 'physician.' These are entered at the commencement of the game by the throws of 'three, four, five, six,' three 'fours,' three 'sixes,' three 'fives,' three 'threes,' three 'twos,' and three 'ones'; and then in the same manner double 'fours,' and so on down to double 'ones.'

The sixty-three compartments, representing as many classes of officials or degrees of rank, comprise three hundred and ninety-seven separate titles, of which the highest, and the highest goal of the game is that of *man fá tin tái hok sz'*, or 'Grand Secretary.' This, however, under favorable conditions, can only be reached by a player who starts from a favorable point, advancement in the game being regulated by rules similar to those which actually regulate promotion under the government. Thus, a player whose fortune it is to enter as physician or astrologer can only obtain promotion in the line of his service, and must be content with a minor goal, as he is ineligible to the high civil office of 'Grand Secretary.'

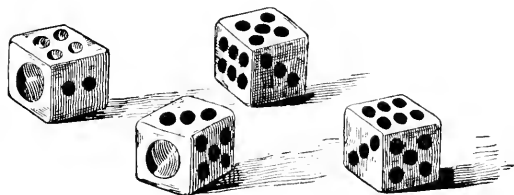
The dice are thrown into a bowl placed in the centre of the sheet, the players throwing in turn, and each continuing to throw until he makes a cast of doublets or higher. It is noticeable that 'fours,' as in Dr. Hyde's account, constitute the highest throw. A pair of 'fours,' according to the rules, is to be reckoned as *tak*, 'virtue,' and leads to a higher place than those of other numbers. 'Sixes' are next highest, and are to be reckoned as *ts'oi*, 'genius;' and in the same manner, in descending degree, 'fives' are to be reckoned as *kung*, 'skill;' 'threes' as *léung*, 'forethought;' 'twos' as *yau*, 'tractability;' and 'ones,' *chong*, 'stupidity.'

The game is much complicated by being played for money or counters, which is necessary under the rules. By this means advancement may be purchased, degradation compounded for, and the winner of a high position rewarded.

The main point of difference between the game as it exists to-day, and as described by Dr. Hyde, is in the number of dice employed. The enlarged form of the diagram is of minor importance, as he himself says that the names of officials written on the tablet are many or few, according to the pleasure of the players.

whom he refers as *D. Shin Fo-cung, amicus noster Chinensis*, published the results of his studies in Chinese games, and the subject, so far as it relates to dice, has remained almost unnoticed until the present day. To you I leave it, whether as one worthy of renewed observation and research, or best dismissed with the apt lines that often too well express the objects of the scholar's zeal :

'The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them.'











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E. M.

(M)

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